

SENATE BILL 3197

By Cooper

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49; Chapters 7, 8, and 9, relative to the creation of a special mission university in Warren County. This act appropriates funds for the establishment of the special mission university for the 1998-1999 fiscal year.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. The Tennessee higher education commission shall establish a special mission university separate and distinct from the present state higher education systems.

SECTION 2. The executive director of the Tennessee higher education commission shall appoint not more than five (5) persons to serve as implementation staff for the special mission university. The implementation staff offices shall be located in Warren County. The staff shall be responsible for selecting degree programs, initiating business and industry alliances, site selection, facility layout and all other matters or acts necessary to establish this university. Of special importance shall be the consideration of innovations in higher education that hold promise for minimizing cost. The implementation staff may, in accordance with the policies of the Tennessee higher education commission, enter into agreements with the University of Wisconsin – Stout and/or others for the purpose of planning, organizing, and designing the special mission.

SECTION 3. This non-traditional university shall particularly include the following in order to maintain flexibility consistent with the needs of the business and industrial job market:

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(1) There shall be continuing involvement of business and industry in the makeup and teaching methodology of the curriculum and instruction within the university.

(2) This non-traditional university shall protect academic freedom, but it shall not grant tenure to its professors and teachers. The general assembly finds with this act, that the flexibility necessary to carry out the mission of the university is inconsistent with tenure.

(3) This university may establish infrastructure that will lead to relationships with business and industry that will enhance the university and help business and industry grow and succeed. The infrastructure shall include but not be limited to a business incubator, a technology park and a system to implement technology transfer.

(4) This university shall provide matriculation opportunity through undergraduate and graduate school that shall include credit earned in Tennessee's two (2) year institutions and technology centers.

SECTION 4. All expenditures of state funds made in establishing and operating this university shall be made in accordance with the rules and regulations of the state of Tennessee and the Tennessee higher education commission.

SECTION 5. The annual operating budget of this university shall be exclusive of any formula funding based on enrollment for at least the first ten (10) years of operation.

SECTION 6. The implementation staff shall issue a report to the governor and the general assembly by not later than January 4, 1999, establishing the initial curriculum, university staff needs, location, building needs, student body size, entrance requirements, corporate involvement and all matters necessary to the establishment of this special mission university.

SECTION 7. In order that the Tennessee higher education commission and implementing staff will be able to successfully establish this university and complete their report,

an initial five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) is hereby appropriated to the Tennessee higher education commission for fiscal year 1998-99 for their use consistent with this act.

SECTION 8. This act shall take effect July 1, 1998, the public welfare requiring it.